



Durham Comprehensive Plan

Chapter 8, Transportation Element

**Durham City-County Planning Department
Public Hearing Draft, June 24, 2004**

The Durham Comprehensive Plan

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Transportation Element



*Summary of Issues
Goal 8.1, Durham's
Transportation
System*

The intent of the Transportation Element is to plan for a multi-modal transportation system that emphasizes public transit and pedestrian and bicycle movement, as well as automobile travel. Durham desires to coordinate local transportation planning with the Transportation Plan of the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization. The Transportation Element established objectives and policies to guide the delivery of transportation services and the provision of transportation facilities.

Summary of Issues

- 1. Regional Transportation Coordination.** How can transportation planning in Durham be successfully integrated into planning for the larger region? The growing problem of congestion is not unique to Durham; it also affects the Research Triangle Park and all the surrounding communities. Linking the transportation planning work of the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro (DCHC) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) with that of the Capital Area MPO (CAMPO) is crucial. Both the State and the Federal government have been encouraging MPO's that are obviously linked by transportation demands to work together. The DCHC MPO and CAMPO have had preliminary discussions about merging. An important issue for the Triangle communities to deal with is how the two MPOs can work together to improve communications and decision-making that affects the entire Region.
- 2. Local vs. State Planning Conflicts.** How can conflicts be resolved between transportation needs at the State level and those the local level? How can transportation planning be balanced between the need to move vehicular traffic faster and more safely, and the desire to reduce traffic speeds to encourage bicycle and pedestrian use. Even more complicated are issues related to roads that are important to intrastate travel, but that are undesirable to local citizens. Recognizing and addressing these issues of State and local conflict are critical if Durham is to effectively manage its future growth and development while meeting its mobility needs.

3. **Reducing Transportation Demand.** Can Durham reduce its demand for new transportation facilities through changes in its land use patterns? How aggressively should this strategy be pursued? Can travel demand management (TDM) strategies effectively address this issue?
4. **Unmet Transportation Needs.** The demand for travel in Durham and in the Triangle Region is growing faster than the community's ability to supply necessary facilities. This imbalance applies to new roads and existing roadway capacity, transit services, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. What level of congestion is Durham willing to accept? Should Durham's standard for levels of service be different in different areas of the community (for example, in downtown vs. rural areas)? How successful Durham is in addressing this problem will significantly influence the community's future quality of life.
5. **Collector Streets.** Durham's long-range transportation plans have traditionally dealt with freeways, major thoroughfares and minor thoroughfares. How can collector streets, and even local streets, be formally incorporated into Durham's transportation planning process?
6. **Transit, Bicycling, and Walking Alternatives.** If bicycle and pedestrian facilities were substantially improved, would more people choose them as a mode of travel and reduce highway demand? Can regional and local transit services offer a cost-effective and time competitive alternative to capture a larger proportion of trips in Durham? Will the inception of regional rail and feeder bus service in 2008 ~~make a serious dent in~~ have an impact on the roadway deficiency problem? How Durham plans for and invests in facilities for walking, bicycling, and transit will affect future mobility and accessibility.
7. **Transportation and Land Use Planning Integration.** How can Durham better integrate its land use and transportation planning processes? How do we ensure that Durham's land use patterns help achieve the transportation goals, and vice versa. A challenge of the Durham Comprehensive Plan is to bridge the gap and improve the integration of transportation planning and land use planning.
8. **Connectivity.** Integrating Durham's land use and transportation systems requires focus on connectivity. How much emphasis should Durham place on improving neighborhood connectivity? Should improved connections between neighborhoods be required? How can Durham improve connectivity while at the same time addressing citizen concerns about safety and cut-through traffic? These are questions that decision-makers will address in preparing the Comprehensive Plan.
9. **Transportation Improvements Funding.** Addressing present transportation deficiencies and providing transportation infrastructure to support new development are some of the most

daunting challenges facing Durham. Federal and State dollars are allocated to projects of statewide importance as well as to those that provide benefits to Durham residents. Impact fees for new development only cover a portion of the real cost of needed transportation infrastructure and cannot be used to alleviate present deficiencies. The General Assembly is reluctant to consider local options for generating revenue to pay for new facilities. Yet, ease of movement around the urban area is a luxury to which we have increasingly grown accustomed. How can Durham pay for needed transportation improvements? What role does new development have?

10. **Airport Noise.** As the Region's municipalities grow together, they grow toward the edges of RDU International Airport. New development around the airport and expansions of RDU operations and facilities increase the potential for conflict. How can the RDU Airport Authority minimize noise problems for its neighbors? How can the airport neighbors make land use decisions that will reduce potential conflicts?

Goal 8.1, Durham's Transportation System

Provide a safe, efficient, attractive, multi-modal transportation system in accordance with growth management objectives and policies.

Objective 8.1.1. Overall Transportation System

Provide a safe, efficient, attractive, multi-modal transportation system that supports local land use, accommodates trip-making choices, maintains mobility, connects adjacent and related land uses, protects the environment and neighborhoods, and improves the quality of life for Durham residents.

Policy 8.1.1a. Regional Transportation Model. The City Public Works Department, with the Metropolitan Planning Organization and other regional partners, shall develop and maintain a multi-modal regional transportation model for the purposes of long range planning and evaluating the impacts of proposed transportation investments on travel and land use patterns.

Policy 8.1.1b. Long-Range Transportation Plan. In order to coordinate the Durham Comprehensive Plan with long range transportation planning, the City and County hereby adopt and include by reference in the Durham Comprehensive Plan the "Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan," as may be amended from time to time, including the Recommended Highways Map, the Recommended Transit Component, the Recommended Fixed-Guideway Component, and the Recommended Bicycle Component. In preparation of long range

2025 Long Range Transportation Plan

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan was approved on December 18, 2002. The Conformity Analysis Report and Conformity Determination Plan found that it complies with provisions of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century of 1997, and accomplishes the intent of the NC State Implementation Plan (SIP).

transportation plans, the City-County Planning Department and the City Public Works Department shall recommend transportation services and facilities to match the Tier designations and land uses identified in the Durham Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 8.1.1c. Transportation Improvements. The City Public Works Department shall recommend and program transportation projects that are consistent with the most recent Long Range Transportation Plan.

Objective 8.1.2. Road System

Construct and maintain an attractive street and highway system that allows people and goods to be moved safely, conveniently, and efficiently.

Policy 8.1.2a. Transportation Level of Service Standards. The level of service standards for development tiers in Durham shall be as indicated in Table 8-1, Transportation Level of Service Standards.

Table 8-1, Transportation Level of Service Standards

Application	Level of Service Standard
Downtown Tier	LOS E
Compact Neighborhood Tier	LOS E
Urban Tier	LOS D
Suburban Tier	LOS D
Rural Tier	LOS C

Policy 8.1.2b. Transportation Corridor Segment Level of Service Standards. The City Public Works Department and the City-County Planning Department shall evaluate and establish distinct transportation level of service standards for thoroughfare corridor segments. In undertaking this evaluation, give priority to the US 15-501 corridor and the NC 54/I-40 corridor.

Policy 8.1.2c. Traffic Impact Mitigation. Where proposed development in the Urban, Compact Neighborhood, or Downtown Tiers would exceed the established level of service standard, the required mitigation shall be designed to not adversely impact established developments; such mitigation measures could include dispersal of traffic through alternative routes, changes in signalization, travel demand management, traffic calming, and provision of transportation alternatives.

Policy 8.1.2d. Transportation Facilities Plan. The City Public Works Department shall prepare an updated thoroughfare plan, to be called the Durham Transportation Facilities Plan and to show locations for long-range transportation facilities, including major thoroughfares, collector streets, fixed-guideway transit routes,

other transit routes, sidewalks, and bicycle routes. Upon adoption by the City and County, the Durham Transportation Facilities Plan shall be adopted and included by reference in the Durham Comprehensive Plan as the Official Map for purposes of right-of-way preservation.

Policy 8.1.2e. US 15-501 Major Investment Study. The City and County hereby adopt and include by reference in the Durham Comprehensive Plan the “US 15-501 Major Investment Study, Phase II Report” (as may be amended from time to time).

Policy 8.1.2f. NC 54/I-40 Transit Corridor Feasibility Study, Phase I. The City and County hereby adopt and include by reference in the Durham Comprehensive Plan the “NC 54/I-40 Transit Corridor Feasibility Study, Phase I” (as may be amended from time to time).

Policy 8.1.2g. Typical Roadway Cross Sections. For development in the City, the City Public Works Department shall require right-of-way dedication in accordance with the typical roadway cross sections adopted by the City Council. In absence of a set of cross-sections adopted by the City Council, the City Public Works Department shall use the typical roadway cross-sections indicated in the “Fiscally Constrained 2025 Long-Range Transportation Plan” (as may be amended from time to time). The City Public Works Department shall require construction of residential streets in accordance with the “City of Durham Reference Guide For Development,” (as may be amended from time to time). For development in the County, the City-County Planning Department shall require right-of-way dedication in accordance with the typical roadway cross section established by the NC Department of Transportation, including where appropriate the NC Department of Transportation “Traditional Neighborhood Development Design Guidelines.”

Policy 8.1.2h. Trees and Bicycle- and Pedestrian-Friendly Street Cross Sections. The City Public Works Department and the City-County Planning Department shall re-evaluate adopted street cross sections in order to promote bicycle and pedestrian travel and safety, ~~and~~ to minimize impervious surfaces, and allow for more tree planting within the right-of-way, with particular consideration to variable standards by Tier. Such street cross sections shall allow trees planted in medians and within the right-of-way, making appropriate provisions to minimize tree and utility conflicts, doing so in a manner that promotes tree planting opportunities rather than limiting them.

Policy 8.1.2i. Adopted Collector Street Plans. The City and County hereby adopt and include by reference in the Durham Comprehensive Plan the “Wake-Durham Comprehensive Street System Plan,” (as they may be amended from time to time).

Policy 8.1.2j. Collector Street Plans. The City Public Works Department, in conjunction with the City-County Planning

Department, shall prepare a collector street plans for portions of Durham that existing plans do not cover. In preparing collector street plans, priority shall be given to areas in southwest Durham County.

Policy 8.1.2k. Center of the Region Collector Street Plan. The City and County acknowledge the work being undertaken by the Triangle J Council of Governments (TJCOG) to develop a collector street plan within the Center of the Region, as defined by the TJCOG. Upon completion of this collector street plan, the City and County shall amend the Durham Comprehensive Plan to incorporate this collector street plan.

Policy 8.1.2l. Transportation Plan Implementation. The City-County Planning Department and other City and County departments shall use the “Transportation Facilities Plan,” the Wake-Durham Comprehensive Street System Plan, and other adopted collector street plans when evaluating new development and shall require that new development provide facilities in conformance with those collector street plans.

Policy 8.1.2m. Transportation Level of Service Maintenance. In order to maintain the level of service on Durham roads, the City-County Planning Department shall not recommend approval for any development project which would result in the average daily trips exceeding 110 percent of the adopted level of service standard for any adjacent road, unless the impact on the adjacent roads is mitigated. Development projects shall be exempt from this policy if the project results in a change in the average daily trips of no more than 3 percent of the level of service standard on any adjacent road. This exemption shall not apply if the present average daily trips exceed 120 percent of the level of service standard on any adjacent road.

Policy 8.1.2n. Tracking Cumulative Road Impacts. The City Public Works Department and the City-County Planning Department shall develop tracking systems to quantify the cumulative impact of developments on road capacity in order to better maintain the adopted level of service on Durham roads.

Policy 8.1.2o. Traffic Impact Analysis. Through the Unified Development Ordinance, require that the developer provide a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) prior to any site plan or development plan approval where the development proposes to generate at least 150 peak hour vehicle trips. Required TIA’s shall be prepared in accordance with standards established by the City Public Works Department Director.

Policy 8.1.2p. Transportation Impact Fee Structure. The City Public Works Department, in conjunction with the City Budget and Management Services Department and the City-County Planning Department, shall reassess the current impact fee structure in relation to current level of service standards established or identified in the Durham Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 8.1.2q. ~~Paving Gravel~~ Unpaved Streets. The City Public Works Department shall prepare a plan for paving gravel streets in the ~~Downtown and Compact Neighborhood Tiers~~ Urban Tier and shall include a timeframe and proposed program of capital improvement projects.

Objective 8.1.3. Mass Transit

Provide a safe, convenient, accessible, competitive, and affordable mass transit system, provided by public and private operators, that enhances mobility, economic development, air quality and the development of compatible land uses along transit corridors.

Policy 8.1.3a. Mass Transit Level of Service Standards. The City Public Works Department, the Durham Area Transit Authority (DATA), the Triangle Transit Authority and the City-County Planning Department shall evaluate and establish transit level of service standards for different Tiers and thoroughfare corridor segments to achieve a higher transit mode split.

Policy 8.1.3b. Regional Bus Service. The City shall continue to coordinate with the Triangle Transit Authority and other communities in the Region to explore opportunities for improved bus service through regionalization of mass transit.

Policy 8.1.3c. Regional Rail System, Phase I. In order to coordinate the Durham Comprehensive Plan with regional rail plans, the City and County hereby adopt and include by reference in the Durham Comprehensive Plan the Triangle Transit Authority Regional Rail Plan, Phase I. The City and County shall continue efforts to implement the Regional Rail Plan by designating Compact Neighborhoods around proposed regional rail transit stations and programming capital improvements that support mass transit in the vicinity of designated transit stations. (See Intergovernmental Coordination Element, Policy 17.1.3c.)

Policy 8.1.3d. Regional Transit Plan. The City and County shall support planning for and protection of the transit corridors identified in the most recently adopted version of the Triangle Transit Authority's Regional Transit Plan.

Policy 8.1.3e. Development Review and Regional Rail. The City-County Planning Department and the City Public Works Department shall review development proposals in relation to the adopted Regional Transit Plan, and shall seek dedication or reservation of right-of-way along designated transit corridors in conformance with the that Plan.

Policy 8.1.3f. Requirements for Mass Transit Facilities. The City-County Planning Department shall ensure that, through the Unified Development Ordinance, transit passenger terminals are a permitted use within zoning districts in the Compact Neighborhood and Downtown Tiers, and where appropriate, in the Suburban Tier.

Objective 8.1.4. Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation

Provide a pedestrian and bicycle system that offers an alternative means of transportation, allows greater access to public transit, supports recreational opportunities, and connect adjacent and related land uses.

Policy 8.1.4a. Durham Trails and Greenways Master Plan. In order to coordinate the Durham Comprehensive Plan with trails and greenways planning, the City and County hereby adopt and include by reference in the Durham Comprehensive Plan the “Durham Trails and Greenways Master Plan, 2001” (as may be amended from time to time). (See Chapter 10, Parks and Recreation Element, Policy 10.1.4b, Durham Trails and Greenways Master Plan.)

Policy 8.1.4b. Development Review and the Adopted Trails and Greenways Plan. The City-County Planning Department, the City Parks and Recreation Department, and the City Public Works Department shall review development proposals in relation to the Durham Trails and Greenways Master Plan and seek dedication or reservation of right-of-way or easements and construction of facilities in conformance with that Plan.

Policy 8.1.4c. Regional Bicycle Plan. In order to coordinate the Durham Comprehensive Plan with the regional bicycle planning, the City and County hereby adopt and include by reference in the Durham Comprehensive Plan the “Regional Bicycle Plan, Durham and Orange Counties, NC” (as may be amended from time to time).

Policy 8.1.4d. Development Review and the Adopted Regional Bicycle Plans. The City-County Planning Department, the City Parks and Recreation Department, and the City Public Works Department shall review development proposals in relation to the Regional Bicycle Plan and the Bicycle Component of the 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan, and seek dedication or reservation of right-of-way or easements and construction of facilities in conformance with that Plan.

Policy 8.1.4e. Regional Bicycle Plan Update. The City Public Works Department shall participate with the Metropolitan Planning Organization and regional partners to update the Regional Bicycle Plan.

Policy 8.1.4f. Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission. The City and County shall continue to support the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission as an advisory body to the City and the County promoting bicycle and pedestrian opportunities. (See Intergovernmental Coordination Element, Policy 17.1.3e.)

Policy 8.1.4g. Public Education, Bicycling and Walking. The City Public Works Department and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Commission shall increase efforts to educate the public about the benefits of walking and bicycling.

Policy 8.1.4h. Bicycle Facilities in New Development. Through the Unified Development Ordinance, establish standards for bicycle facilities in new developments, including the provision of bicycle parking facilities as well as bicycle travel lanes, tailored to the unique character of each Tier.

Policy 8.1.4i. Pedestrian Facilities in New Development. Through the Unified Development Ordinance, establish pedestrian circulation standards for new development in the Suburban, Urban, Compact Neighborhood and Downtown Tiers, considering the length and classification of the street, as well as the emphasis on pedestrian modality of the Tier.

Policy 8.1.4j. City Sidewalks and Pedestrian Infrastructure. In order to promote pedestrian safety and access, the City Public Works Department shall prepare a plan to complete the sidewalk and pedestrian infrastructure in established neighborhoods and developed areas in the City where the sidewalk system is incomplete.

Policy 8.1.4k. County Sidewalks and Pedestrian Infrastructure. In order to promote pedestrian safety and access, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission shall prepare a plan to complete the sidewalk and pedestrian infrastructure in established neighborhoods and developed areas within the Suburban Tier, Compact Neighborhood Tier, and Rural Villages where the sidewalk system is incomplete.

Objective 8.1.5. RDU Airport

Ensure that land uses around the Raleigh-Durham International Airport are appropriate to the Airport vicinity and contribute to safe operations of the Airport.

Policy 8.1.5a. Airport Overlay. The City and County shall continue to implement the Airport Overlay in the Unified Development Ordinance to ensure the compatibility of development within the 60 Ldn of the Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority, with anticipated noise generated at the Airport.

Policy 8.1.5b. Airport Authority Development Review. The City-County Planning Department shall coordinate review of development proposals within the Airport Overlay with the Raleigh Durham Airport Authority, submitting such proposals to the Authority for review and comment before action by any approving authority. (See Intergovernmental Coordination Element, Policy 17.1.3d Support for the Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority.)

Objective 8.1.6. Land Use and Transportation Integration

Maintain a long-range Transportation Plan that is integrated with local land use plans and development policies.

Policy 8.1.6a. Compact Neighborhoods. Using the Future Land Use Map, the City-County Planning Department shall recommend appropriate land uses, parking requirements, and development regulations for incorporation into the Unified Development Ordinance, that encourage compact, mixed use, transit-friendly, bike-friendly and pedestrian-friendly development.

Policy 8.1.6b. Minimum Residential Density in Compact Neighborhood and Downtown Tiers. The City and County shall encourage transit services in the Compact Neighborhood and Downtown Tiers by adopting and enforcing through the Unified Development Ordinance minimum residential densities for the residentially designated portions of these areas.

Policy 8.1.6c. Mixed Use in Compact Neighborhood and Downtown Tiers. To encourage transit services, the City and County shall encourage increased densities in mixed use projects within the Compact Neighborhood and Downtown Tiers through the use of incentives, such as density bonuses for projects that integrate uses vertically.

Policy 8.1.6d. Development Review and Adopted Transportation Plans. The City-County Planning Department and the City Public Works Department shall review development proposals in relation to all adopted transportation plans, and shall seek dedication or reservation of right-of-way along designated road and transit corridors in conformance with the those plans.

Policy 8.1.6e. Internal Connectivity. In order to ensure that streets function in an interdependent manner, the City and County shall, through the Unified Development Ordinance, establish standards for internal pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, such as a minimum connectivity ratio, as measured by the ratio of links to nodes in any development. The City Public Works Department, in conjunction with the City-County Planning Department and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission, shall develop standards for bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to be incorporated into the Unified Development Ordinance.

Policy 8.1.6f. External Connectivity. In order to ensure that streets function in an interdependent manner, provide access for emergency and service vehicles, and provide a continuous and comprehensible street system that can operate within the adopted level of service and reduce demand on thoroughfares, the City and County shall require external connectivity in new developments. Through the Unified Development Ordinance, the City and County shall require that new developments provide street connections to adjacent areas in each of the four cardinal directions direction, reasonably determined by the Director of the City-County Planning Department and the City Transportation Division Manager, at appropriate spacing intervals. Unless identified as a facility on the adopted Transportation Facilities Plan, the Street connections shall include traffic calming measures, as appropriate.

These street connections shall consider the specific topographic and hydrologic features of the area, existing development patterns, and the proximity of collector streets in the area that can serve the function of external connectivity among development projects. The Unified Development Ordinance provisions shall make exceptions for small developments.

Policy 8.1.6g. Parking Requirements. Through the Unified Development Ordinance, establish parking requirements, including location and arrangement, tailored to the unique character of each Tier.

Policy 8.1.6h. Regional Park-and-Ride System. The City Public Works Department shall participate with regional partners to develop a regional park and ride system for cars and bicycles to support transit services and encourage ridesharing.

Policy 8.1.6i. Travel Demand Management. In order to expand ridesharing, carpooling and vanpooling opportunities, Durham County shall continue to implement its travel demand management efforts, including the Commute Trip Reduction Ordinance and programs to promote alternative travel options and improve air quality.

Policy 8.1.6j. Best Work Places for Commuters. The City and County shall take steps necessary to maintain their status as “Best Work Places for Commuters,” as defined by the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Policy 8.1.6k. Intelligent Transportation Systems. The City Public Works Department shall investigate and propose actions to use intelligent transportation systems and advanced technologies to support appropriate transportation facility use and traffic law compliance, and to achieve the objectives of the Transportation Element.

Policy 8.1.6l. Neighborhood Traffic Calming. The Public Works Department shall prepare and update studies of neighborhood traffic calming as requested, giving priority to the Downtown, Compact Neighborhood and Urban Tiers. The Department shall seek funding for implementation of recommended measures identified in these studies through the City’s annual budget process and the Capital Improvement Program, and from funding sources available through the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization. The Department shall annually report on the progress of neighborhood traffic calming studies and implementation measures to the City Council, the Planning Commission and the Inter-Neighborhood Council.

Policy 8.1.6m. Traffic Calming Standards and Practices. To encourage streets in new developments to be designed with traffic calming principles, the Public Works Department, in conjunction with the Planning Commission, the Inter-neighborhood Council

and representatives of the development community, shall prepare a manual of acceptable traffic calming standards and practices that can be used in streets in new and existing development streets for traffic volume and speed control.

Policy 8.1.6n. Preservation of Neighborhood Streets. The City-County Planning Department shall assess ways to analyze the impact of new development on neighborhood streets in the rezoning process. The Department shall develop standards for inclusion in the Unified Development Ordinance to allow site plans and preliminary plats to be rejected on the basis that traffic impact would materially alter the nature and character of existing neighborhood streets.

